**Improvement in condition of Roads**

1293. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that due to bad roads operational cost of vehicles raised by 25 per cent besides higher fuel consumption;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to make any long term strategy to improve condition of the roads throughout the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI):(a) It is a fact that the bad condition of roads leads to increase in the operational cost of vehicles which includes the cost of fuel also. However, the quantum of increase depends on several factors like condition of road and type of vehicles etc.

(b) and (c) Government has launched the National Highways Development Project comprising of 4/6 laning of 13146 km of National Highways. A programme for improvement of riding quality of remaining National Highway network has been taken up since 1999-2000 and is likely to be completed within the next 2-3 years. Besides other improvement measures like widening to 2/4 lane, strengthening, reconstruction of weak and narrow bridges apart from maintenance & repairs are also being taken up to improve the condition of the National Highways.

In addition, the Government is also providing funds for improvement of State Highways and Major District Roads from Central Road Fund for which there is a budget provision of Rs. 962 crore during 2001-2002.